

SM



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/292,056	04/14/1999	JOEL S. GREENBERGER	PITT-1DIV	3040
7590 05/10/2004 ANSEL M SCHWARTZ ONE STERLING PLAZA 201 N CRAIG STREET SUITE 304 PITTSBURGH, PA 15213			EXAMINER SITTON, JEHANNE SOUAYA	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1634	

DATE MAILED: 05/10/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

2M.

Office Action Summary**Application No.**

09/292,056

Applicant(s)

GREENBERGER ET AL.

Examiner

Jehanne Souaya Sitton

Art Unit

1634

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 February 2004.
 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 86-97,99,100,
 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 47-64, 70, 74-81, ~~86-100~~, 103, 104 and 114-124 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed 86-97,99,100,
 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 47-64, 70, 74-81, ~~86-100~~, 103, 104, 114-124 is/are rejected.
 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Currently, claims 1, 47-64, 70, 74-81, 86-97, 99, 100, 103, 104, 114-124 are pending in the instant application. All the amendments and arguments have been thoroughly reviewed but are deemed insufficient to place this application in condition for allowance. The following rejections are either newly applied, as necessitated by amendment, or are reiterated. They constitute the complete set being presently applied to the instant Application. Response to Applicant's arguments follow. This action is FINAL.
2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
3. The rejection of claims 1, 47, 48, 51-64, 74-79, 94, 96, 103, 104 and 124 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Findley is moot in view of the claim amendments to add a computer to the claimed apparatus, and the new grounds of rejection.

Maintained Rejections

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. Claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 48 and 49 are indefinite in the recitation of “compares images to each other serially” as it is unclear if this limitation further limits the apparatus, structurally. In other words, a structure may have the ability to compare 2 images, or more than 2 images, without

Art Unit: 1634

changing the structure of the apparatus. It is unclear if the recitation is intended to further limit the structure of the apparatus or how it further limits the structure of the apparatus.

Response to Arguments

The response traverses the rejection. The response asserts that it is well known standard patent law in regard to apparatus claims that the structure is physically required to compare images to each other serially. This argument was thoroughly reviewed but was not found persuasive. Firstly, it is noted that attorney's arguments are not persuasive in the absence of evidence on the record. In the instant case, no evidence has been presented as to such "well known standard patent law". Secondly, it is noted that the MPEP, in section 2114, states with regard to claiming an apparatus by it's function:

APPARATUS CLAIMS MUST BE STRUCTURALLY DISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE PRIOR ART

>While features of an apparatus may be recited either structurally or functionally, claims< directed to >an< apparatus must be distinguished from the prior art in terms of structure rather than function. >In re Schreiber, 128 F.3d 1473, 1477-78, 44 USPQ2d 1429, 1431-32 (Fed. Cir. 1997) (The absence of a disclosure in a prior art reference relating to function did not defeat the Board's finding of anticipation of claimed apparatus because the limitations at issue were found to be inherent in the prior art reference); see also In re Swinehart, 439 F.2d 210, 212-13, 169 USPQ 226, 228-29 (CCPA 1971);< In re Danly, 263 F.2d 844, 847, 120 USPQ 528, 531 (CCPA 1959). "[A]pparatus claims cover what a device is, not what a device does." Hewlett-Packard Co. v. Bausch & Lomb Inc., 909 F.2d 1464, 1469, 15 USPQ2d 1525, 1528 (Fed. Cir. 1990) (emphasis in original).

MANNER OF OPERATING THE DEVICE DOES NOT DIFFERENTIATE APPARATUS CLAIM FROM THE PRIOR ART

A claim containing a "recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus" if the prior art apparatus teaches all the structural limitations of the claim. Ex parte Masham, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1987) (The preamble of claim 1 recited that the apparatus was "for mixing flowing developer material" and the body of the claim recited "means for mixing ..., said mixing means being stationary and completely submerged in the developer material". The claim was rejected over a reference which taught all the structural limitations of the claim for the intended use of mixing flowing developer. However, the mixer was only partially submerged in the developer material. The Board held that the amount of submersion is immaterial to the structure of the mixer and thus the claim was properly rejected.).

In the instant case, applicant's arguments are directed to the manner in which the apparatus is used, not to how the structure of the apparatus is limited by the function stated in the claims. The claims are directed to steps in a method, not to structural limitations in an apparatus.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. Claims 114-123 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Maruhashi et al. (U.S. Patent 5,403,735 (Apr. 4, 1995)). Maruhashi teaches a method and apparatus for culturing and detecting cells (abstract). Maruhashi teaches that prior art methods of testing a cell culture for cell viability, growth rate or other diagnostic means have the disadvantages of requiring the opening of a closed and sterile culture system to test, liquid used for testing cannot be returned to the culture because of stains used to test viability, and that such staining means are not very reliable and do not provide any information as to the ratio of viable cells (col. 2 line 48-col. 3 line 12). Maruhashi teaches means for culturing and observing cellular cultures where the means for culturing and means for detecting are in fluid communication so that the culture system does not need to be opened and where microscopy is used to detect cell division state, thereby obviating the need for staining or culture sampling (col. 8 lines 36-67 & Figs. 1, 4 & 8). Maruhashi teaches that such a system can include a temperature controller, pumps and injectors to maintain the pH, temperature, osmotic pressure, dissolved oxygen (col. 7 line 64-col. 8 line 5, col. 16 lines 18-45 & Figure. 21 & 23). Maruhashi teaches that the microscope is in communication with a television camera to capture images and an image processing and calculating device (i.e. computer; see col. 8, line 67-col. 9 line 11). Maruhashi teaches that two microscopes, camera and data processor setups can be used simultaneously (Figure. 8).

Maruhashi teaches a cell culture system (Figure 21 and col. 16, lines 18-52) where an image pick up device (e.g. a microscope (509)) is linked to a controller (510) and is directly attached to the culture vessel (506). Maruhashi teaches that the image pick up device (509) operates as describe for other embodiments of the invention and describes (509) as monitoring the cells and microscopic small particles (col. 16, lines 35-40). Therefore, the teachings of Maruhashi as to a method and apparatus for monitoring cell activity by using a culturing and testing system in fluid communication where the temperature and pH of the culture is regulated and the testing system comprises a microscope, television camera and data processor and where the cells are examined in the location in which they are grown, anticipates all of the limitations of the instantly claimed invention.

Response to Arguments

The response traverses the rejection. The response asserts that the claims have a limitation where an individual cell of the plurality of cells can be examined over time. This argument was thoroughly reviewed but was not found persuasive as the claims do not have such a limitation. Further, such is drawn to a method step, not to a structural distinction between the apparatus of Maruhashi and the instant claims. Unless such limitation provided a structurally distinct feature from the instant claims and the apparatus of Maruhashi, such would not distinguish the claimed apparatus from the apparatus of Maruhashi.

The response further asserts that Patent law requires that the reference teach or suggest to analyze the cells. This argument was thoroughly reviewed but is not found persuasive because Maruhashi teaches that the device identifies cells from the picture images from the image pick up device 26 (see col. 10, lines 20-40). Such can be considered analysis. The amendment of the

claim to include that the image recognition system for analyzing ‘the state’ of each cell does not structurally distinguish the instant claims from the apparatus of Maruhashi. As stated above, the MPEP makes clear that an apparatus must be structurally distinguishable from the teachings of the prior art. In the instant case, Maruhashi teaches a device that identifies cells from picture images which is inherently ‘an image recognition system for analyzing’. It is noted that the claims do not recite an image recognition system that analyze a single cell individually, or that link a cell, but even if they did, the claims would have to provide a structural limitation to distinguish the image recognition system from the device that identifies cells of Maruhashi. Applicant’s argument that Maruhashi has not capability to monitor a single cell is therefore not persuasive. The fact that Maruhashi uses the device in a different method for a different purpose than the intended use for the apparatus of the instant case does not structurally distinguish the apparatus of the instant case from the apparatus of Maruhashi. Further, the recitation that the image recognition system monitors the state of the cells over time is drawn to a step in a method, not to a structural limitation of the image recognition system. It is further noted that the recitation of “over time” can be on the order of a few milliseconds and that such does not structurally limit the apparatus in the instant claims.

6. Claims 114-123 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Matsuzaki et al.

Matsuzaki teaches a method and apparatus for culturing and detecting under conditions where the detecting step is performed under the physiological conditions of the culturing step, the detection portion of the apparatus is in fluid communication with the culturing portion

(abstract, col. 1 lines 11-15, lines 60-65). Matsuzaki also teaches (col. 9 lines 17-24 and Figure 11) that the observing or detecting portion (4') of the apparatus may be an integral portion of the culturing vessel ((1); i.e. place where cells are grown). Matsuzaki teaches that this system has the advantage of not exposing the culture to external conditions during the detecting step, the culture used for detection can be returned to the culturing vessel, and that information obtained from the detecting step can then be used to effect changes in the composition of the culture thereby enhancing culturing efficiency (abstract, col. 2 lines 31-36 and 43-45 & col. 3 lines 13-15). Matsuzaki teaches that the use of a microscope for the detection of the culture and a digital processor (i.e. computer) to processes the images (col. 5, line 63-65 & Figure. 14). Matsuzaki teaches that the temperature, pH and dissolved oxygen and carbon dioxide conditions of the culture are monitored and controlled (col. 8 line 65-col. 9 line 5, Figs 5 & 12). Therefore, Matsuzaki anticipates all of the limitations of the instant claims by teaching a method and apparatus for culturing and measuring cell conditions where the culturing and measuring components are in fluid communication and a microscope and data processor are used to detect the cells and where the state of the cells is detected in the vessel in which the cells are grown.

Response to Arguments

The response traverses the rejection. The response traverses that there is no teaching or suggestion in Matsuzaki of the state of each individual cell of the plurality of cells can be analyzed over time. This argument was thoroughly reviewed but was not found persuasive because the claims do not recite that an individual cell is examined. Further, the amendment of the claim to include that the image recognition system for analyzing 'the state' of each cell does

Art Unit: 1634

not structurally distinguish the instant claims from the apparatus of Matsuzaki. As stated above, the MPEP makes clear that an apparatus must be structurally distinguishable from the teachings of the prior art. In the instant case, Matsuzaki teaches a device that contains an observing or detecting portion which is inherently ‘an image recognition system for analyzing’. It is noted that the claims do not recite an image recognition system that analyze a single cell individually, or that link a cell, but even if they did, the claims would have to provide a structural limitation to distinguish the image recognition system from the device that identifies cells of Matsuzaki. Applicant’s argument that Matsuzaki has not capability to monitor a single cell is therefore not persuasive. The fact that Matsuzaki uses the device in a different method for a different purpose than the intended use for the apparatus of the instant case does not structurally distinguish the apparatus of the instant case from the apparatus of Matsuzaki. Further, the recitation that the image recognition system monitors the state of the cells over time is drawn to a step in a method, not to a structural limitation of the image recognition system. It is further noted that the recitation of “over time” can be on the order of a few milliseconds and that such does not structurally limit the apparatus in the instant claims. Matsuzaki teaches an imaging device that recognizes all of the cells and calculates size, form and brightness (see col. 6, lines 29-41).

Applicant’s arguments with regard to claim 57, on page 32 are not considered as the instant rejection was not applied to claim 57.

New Grounds of Rejection

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. Claims 1, 47-64, 70, 74-79, 94, 96, 103, 104, and 114-124 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Findley in view of Weinreb.

Findley teaches a closed, environmentally controlled incubator for in vitro fertilization (see abstract, and cols 1 and 2). Findley teaches that the incubator (mechanism for incubating a plurality of cells, in this case, individual fertilized eggs) is used for maintaining and examining cells, including mammalian eggs (single cell), zygotes, and pre embryos in culture media which includes an environmentally closed chamber (see col. 2, lines 57-65). Findley teaches that the chamber also has a control means for maintaining oxygen concentration within the chamber (mechanism for individually controlling automatically the cell), and a microscope stand and an aperture in the enclosure for permitting a microscope (mechanism for individually tracking and identifying, mechanism for automatically determining, positioned on the stand to extend through said aperture and cuff means for sealing between the microscope and said aperture (see col. 3, lines 1-5). Findley further teaches that the incubator may also include an airlock, which may have a sliding tray therein for permitting objects, such as culture dishes to be placed within or removed from the incubator during use without contaminating the atmosphere within the incubator with air (col. 3, lines 6-12, and fig 2). Findley also teaches that the airlock may include means for coupling a source of gas for controlling the composition (mechanism for individually controlling automatically the cell, mechanism for introducing media) within the airlock (col. 3, lines 12-15). It is noted that the term “automatically” has not been interpreted to be limited to a system that is automated. The specification does not define this term to be limited

Art Unit: 1634

to such. It is further noted that the apparatus of Findley inherently provides an apparatus that can keep track of an individual cell of a plurality of cells over time and can determine when a cell has doubled. With regard to claim 74, the recitation of stem cell has been given no weight as this recitation does not further structurally limit the claimed apparatus over the teachings of Findley.

Findley does not teach a system including a liquid handling system or a computer for automatically determining the state of in individual cell, however one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the apparatus of Findley et al, for the purpose of monitoring any type of cell individually, without the use of a human technician, for the obvious improvement of making the apparatus of Findley et al more versatile to use without the cost and training required to have a trained operator performing the same functions. Findley teaches an apparatus whereby cells can be incubated and grown and wherein media can be added or growth or maintenance conditions can be changed while the cells remain in a closed environment. Findley further teaches that the cells can be observed individually (a microscope can detect a single cell) while they are in the environmentally closed environment. Weinreb teaches an apertured cell carrier where each individual cell has a specific defined address within the carrier so that each individual cell can be monitored (see abstract). Weinreb teaches that one can subject all of the cells to one or more tests, but can examine the properties of each cell by directing the particular diagnosing/ measuring instruments to the cell's unique address (col.4, lines 34-39). Weinreb further teaches that the apparatus includes a device for aligning the carrier with a device whereby the individual addresses of the holes in the carrier are identifiable by a set of x and y coordinates as when the carrier is viewed through a microscope (col.11, lines 50-55).

Weinreb also teaches that an orifice (150) is connected by an outflow tube (160) to a pump (162) where the pump serves to produce a pressure differential across the carrier which pulls the cells into the apertures of the carrier. Weinreb teaches that a basin (156) is configured so as to allow a microscope objective to be brought close enough to the carrier to bring the apertures into focus. Weinreb teaches that solutions are provided to the basin by one or more inflow tubes which are connected to syringe needles. The inflow tubes are used to introduce bathing and reagent solutions to the cells. Weinreb also teaches an embodiment wherein in response to command signals from a controller, such as a computer, separation and optical scanning are performed automatically, without need for a trained operator (see col. 26, lines 30-36). Weinreb teaches (fig 16) an overall system for analysis which includes a flow chamber mounted on a table, controlled by a computer, an optical system, solutions necessary for testing, a solution control unit that controls the supply of the respective solutions, an electro-optical mechanical feed back control and a computer system to analyze measured values (see col. 26, lines 38-67). Weinreb teaches that optical information is fed into a computer, evaluated and stored, such that every single cell is identified according to its coordinates and everything that can be learned about each cell is stored in the computer (see col. 27). Weinreb further teaches that a cell by cell analysis provides more information for the understanding of biological implications and makes it possible to realize such analysis very quickly and accurately (see col. 6, lines 58-63).

Therefore it would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve the apparatus of Findley for the purpose of monitoring growth and state of any type of cell individually as Weinreb teaches that cell by cell analysis provides more information for the understanding of biological implications and makes it possible

Art Unit: 1634

to realize such analysis very quickly and accurately (see col.6, lines 58-63). It would have been further prima facie obvious to the ordinary artisan to further improve the apparatus of Findley to provide a device whereby liquid media could be added as required for growth for different types of cells. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to improve the apparatus of Findley by adding a liquid handling system to make the apparatus of Findley more versatile to perform. While Weinreb does not specifically teach a closed system, the system of Weinreb could be easily closed by providing an enclosure about the system as taught by Findley et al. Further, it would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to improve the apparatus of Findley to provide a computer system to analyze each cell. The ordinary artisan would be motivated to improve the apparatus of Findley by providing a computer for analysis of each cell because doing so would save time and would not require training a technician to perform the same task.

8. Claims 80, 81, 86-93, 95, 97, and 99-100 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Findley in view of Weinreb, as applied to claims 1, 47-64, 70, 74-79, 94, 96, 103, 104, and 114-124 above, and further in view of Early et al.

The teachings of Findley in view of Weinreb are set forth above. Findley in view of Weinreb do not teach a robotic mechanism for automatically dispensing and aspirating different material. Earley teaches a robotic system for robotically performing Sanger reactions (see abstract). Earley teaches that the robot can manipulate microtiter plates, for example, and can perform pipetting in the 5-200 microliter range (see abstract). Earley teaches that the robot arm is mounted such that it has motion in vertical and horizontal planes (see claim 1). Therefore, it

Art Unit: 1634

would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve the apparatus of Findley in view of Weinreb, with a robot arm for automatically dispensing media as Earley teaches that such type of robotic mechanism is capable of providing liquid media to many different reaction containers with speed, quality and reproducibility (see col. 15, lines 23-38). The ordinary artisan would have recognized that the apparatus of Findley in view of Weinreb could be improved by including a robotic arm for handling different reagents and different cultures with “speed, quality, and reproducibility” as taught by Earley.

Response to Arguments

The response traverses the rejections. Applicant’s arguments with regard to Findley alone are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection. With regard to the apparatus of Findley in view of Weinreb, the response asserts that Weinreb does not teach a dynamically controlled environment system. This argument has been thoroughly reviewed but was found unpersuasive as neither the specification nor the claims define this term to distinguish the instant claims from the apparatus of Findley in view of Weinreb. The response’s assertion that Weinreb is interested in and focused on separating groups of cells is not found persuasive because the use of the instant apparatus does not structurally distinguish the apparatus of the instant claims from the apparatus of Findley in view of Weinreb. Further, in response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

Although the response asserts that Weinreb is interested in and focused on separating groups of cells, it is noted that Weinreb is not only interested in separating groups cells but analyzing individual cells which are at known addresses under different conditions, such as applying and removing substances by changing bathing fluids while the cells are in the carrier (see column 14, lines 44-68). Weinreb teaches that it is important to bring and remove specific substances from the cells in order to perform a variety of analysis (see col. 15, lines 6-10). Weinreb teaches that this system allows, for example, the exact number of activated lymphokines (activated by different substances) to be determined for different stimulating agents. Further, Weinreb teaches that the system can be generically provided for conducting biological assays. (see col. 27, lines 58-68). The response does not provide any specific arguments with regard to the apparatus of Findley in view of Weinreb and further in view of Earley.

Conclusion

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37

Art Unit: 1634

CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

10. No claims are allowable over the cited prior art.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to examiner Jehanne Sitton whose telephone number is (571) 272-0752. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Thursday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and on alternate Fridays.

Note: The examiner's name has changed from Jehanne Souaya to Jehanne Sitton. All future correspondence to the examiner should reflect the change in name.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Jones, can be reached on (571) 272-0745. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-0507.



Jehanne Sitton
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1634

4/27/04